DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 224 624 RC 013 677

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TITLE Oral Communication Project, Hastings Teacher Corps. An Evaluation Report.
SPONS AGENCY Department of Education, Washington, D.C. Teacher Corps.
PUB DATE 82
NOTE 47p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; *Class Activities; Classroom Observation Techniques; Comparative Analysis; Curriculum Enrichment; Elementary Education; *Inservice Teacher Education; *Institutes (Training Programs); Low Income Groups; *Migrant Children; Rural Schools; *Skill Development; *Speech Communication; Teacher Effectiveness
IDENTIFIERS Florida; *Hastings Teacher Corps Project FL

ABSTRACT

The evaluation examined whether there was a difference in the achievement in four dimensions of communications skills (content, organization, language usage, and delivery) of students of eight K-6 teachers attending a 2-week summer institute and nine 1-6 teachers attending four inservice sessions, and whether there was a correlation between grade level and dimensions of communication skills emphasized. The institute and inservice sessions were developed to aid teachers in the Hastings schools, located in a rural agricultural area of northeast Florida, in improving the oral communication skills of the primarily migrant students and children from low socioeconomic families. Teachers attending the institute rated the oral communication skills of 138 students and 142 students were rated by teachers attending the inservice sessions. Pre- and post-tests examined student performance. A time series design checked the correlation between grade levels. Grade levels were compared weekly. An onsite observation of the methods and approaches used by the teachers was conducted. A weekly checklist identified the type of oral communication curriculum activities used during the week and the number of times certain speaking/listening dimensions were used. Results indicated a statistically significant improvement in student performance; students of teachers attending the institute showed more gain; and teachers used different patterns of oral communication activities. (NQA)

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ORAL COMMUNICATION PROJECT
HASTINGS TEACHER CORPS

AN EVALUATION REPORT
1982

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RC 015 298

ABSTRACT

A program was developed as a part of the Hastings Teacher Corps Project to improve the Oral Communication skills of the students in the Hastings Schools. A Summer Institute was developed to help teachers develop curriculum materials and strategies to enrich and improve the oral communication experiences of students. Hastings schools are located in a rural agricultural area of Northeast Florida in St. John's County. There are a large percentage of children of migrant farm workers and children from families with low socio-economic status.

This report focuses on whether the project aided student performance in communication skills, whether there was a difference between Summer Institute participants and non-participants in how their students achieved in four dimensions of communication skills, and whether there was a correlation between grade level and dimensions of communication skills emphasized.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to present the results of the oral communications project implemented during the 1981-1982 school year in the Hastings Elementary School. The project was sponsored by the Hastings Teacher Corps grant.

BACKGROUND

Because there was a need to improve the communication skills of the students in the Hastings schools, a strategy was developed to help aid teachers in accomplishing this goal. The results of previous needs assessments, the review of the results of the Florida Statewide Assessment Program and Stanford Achievement Test battery, all indicated that oral communication skills curriculum and experiences of students needed to be enriched and improved.

First of all, a two week summer institute was developed to accomplish this goal. There were two major aspects of the institute. The first goal of the institute was to have each team member develop a specific curriculum package that would be implemented in his or her classroom during the 1981-82 school year. The second goal of the institute was to help participants integrate previously acquired skills and knowledge from the previous inservice activities of the last two years with the development of curriculum materials to use in the classroom.

The specific objectives are outlined in Appendix 1. There are four areas: Oral Communication, Communication Skills, Questioning Skills, and Curriculum Design.

The purpose of this curriculum development was to help improve the oral communications skills of the students by the increased emphasis on the frequency of the number of purposeful oral communication activities

taking place in the classroom. Teachers were encouraged to use a variety of oral communication activities as an integrated part of the curriculum. The activities were designed to emphasize four dimensions of oral communication (Brown, 1981).

These were:

1. Content - what is said, the words necessary to translate ideas and concepts into messages that may be understood.

2. Organization - how words and ideas in a message are related to one another. Organization skills include order of events, main ideas, supporting facts, cause and effect, inferences and conclusions.

3. Language Usage - structural rules for words, word order, agreement and tenses, the pattern of speaking accepted for the language being used commonly referred to as grammar.

4. Delivery - the clarity with which a spoken message is sent. Volume, frequency and speed, pronunciation and enunciation are the important dimensions. The format and schedule of the institute is included in Appendix A.

Not all the teachers in the system participated in the two week institute. The methods and curriculum materials were viewed as important for those not participating in the institute. Four inservice sessions were held for this group. Two were training sessions to help these

teachers learn how to assess students' oral communication competencies. Another consisted of a sharing session by those who attended the institute. The first was an introductory session. All teachers, both workshop and non workshop, received the preliminary manual Let's Talk: A Communication Handbook.

CONTEXT

The Communication Skills project was conducted in the Hastings School System. The project was a part of the Hastings Teacher Corps Project which was funded for a four year period and was a cooperative program involving the St. Johns County School District, the Hastings Community Council and the University of North Florida.

The grant focused on a joint effort designed to achieve four major goals:

1. to improve the school climate in both the elementary and secondary schools of Hastings,
2. to upgrade inservice and preservice activities,
3. to institutionalize the successful practices developed in the project schools and the participating university,
4. to disseminate successful practices to other educators and institutions.

Specifically, the first objective of the project was to raise the achievement level in the basic areas. The first targeted area was language arts. This report presents only the data relating to the 1981 Hastings Teacher Corps Basic Skills program in communication skills.

COMMUNITY

The Hastings schools serve the areas of Elton and Hastings in Northeast Florida in St. Johns County. This area is a rural area which is almost exclusively agricultural. The two major crops in the area are potatoes and cabbage.

There are very few students whose parents are white collar workers. Only four percent fit this classification while 15 percent are classified as being in the low income group. It should also be noted that 50 percent of the students in the Hastings Schools are identified as migrant students. These students travel with their parents and relatives up and down the Eastern Seabord, working in agriculture or agricultural related vocations.

The school system was desegrated during the 1970-71 year. Desegregation at first greatly affected community attitudes and values toward the school and has caused a loss of white students to private schools. Although the effects of desegregation on the total school program are somewhat dimenished over 10 years later, it is still a factor.

The Hastings Elementary School, the primary site of the project on

communication skills, is located on 29 acres of land on the south side of Hastings and serves students in prekindergarten through sixth grade. In 1976-77 86 percent of the students were on free or reduced priced luncheons. The staff of Hastings Elementary School comprises of 15 regular classroom teachers, two prekindergarten teachers who teach three and four year old migrant children, a EMR teacher, a SLD teacher, a librarian, three Title I reading teachers, and a principal and five teacher aides.

THE SAMPLE

Eight teachers were represented in the summer institute group. One taught the preschool group: two, kindergarten; one, first grade; one, third grade; one, fourth grade and two fifth/sixth grades. There were 138 students who were rated by these teachers on oral communication skills both in September and in April.

Nine teachers were involved in the group which were presented four inservice workshops. All grades except kindergarten were represented as well as one EMR teacher. One hundred and forty-two students were rated on oral communication skills by the teachers in this group both in September and in April.

The group was tested in the Stanford Achievement Test (1973) during March of 1982. There were three first grades with total battery grade equivalent scores of 1.8, 2.0, and 2.1. The two second grades scored 2.2 and 2.3 on the Battery Total. The two third grades had 3.9 and 4.1.

The fourth grades scored 4.8 and 5.0. The fifth grade 5.0 where as the sixth grades averaged 5.8, 5.9, and 6.9. Overall, except for the second grade and two of the sixth grade groups, the students were at grade level or slightly higher.

EVALUATION DIMENSIONS

The evaluation was designed to answer the following three questions:

1. Did student performance in communication skills improve?

2. Was there a difference between summer institute participants and non-participants in how their students achieved in four dimensions of communication skills?

3. Was there a correlation between grade level and dimensions of communication skills emphasized?

EVALUATION DESIGN

A pre test - post test design was utilized to investigate whether student performance improved. A pre test - post test non equivalent control group design was utilized to test whether there was a difference between the students whose teachers participated in the summer institute and those who did not. Random assignment was not possible in the school environment. Participants volunteered to participate in the summer workshop. A time series design was utilized to check whether there was a correlation between grade level taught. Grade levels were compared at

weekly periods.

An outside evaluator also made an onsite visit to observe the methods and approaches to oral communication being used by the teachers.

INSTRUMENTATION

The Massachusettes Teacher Observation Rating Scale was utilized by teachers to rate their classes in four dimensions of oral communication. These were delivery, organization, content, and language. Teachers were asked to rate each student on each of the four dimensions on a five point scale, one representing poor; three, satisfactory; and five, good. Teachers were trained either in the summer institute or in the inservice workshops to use the scale.

Delivery took in factors of volume, rate and articulation. Organization related to relationship and order. Content consisted of quantity, relevance, and adaptation while Language related to grammar and choice of words. Teachers completed the ratings of each student in September and again in April. A copy of the rating form is included in Appendix B.

A Weekly Checklist was also constructed to identify the type of oral communication curriculum activities used during the week as well as the number of times certain Speaking/Listening dimensions were used. They were also asked to check the estimated average time per day they spent in oral-communication activities as well as the number of times per day four types of questioning strategies were used. The four types were the use of

observational questions, comparison questions, summarizing questions and inference/opinion questions. A copy of the schedule is included in Appendix C.

ANALYSIS

To investigate whether student performance in oral communication skills improved in pre and post test ratings of all the students were recorded in a 5 by 5 bivariate table for each of the four oral communication dimensions. The means for each class were also computed.

To compare the performance of the classes taught by participants in the summer institute with those who just participated in the four inservice workshops, a two by three table was constructed for the total sample. The two dimensions were gain and group. Gain was divided into three categories: positive, no, and negative. Group was divided into two categories: Summer Institute/ 4 session inservice.

Teacher checklists were tallied each week by level and comparisons made and profiles constructed.

LIMITATIONS

There were a number of factors which need to be taken into consideration when interpreting the data. These are:

1. Analysis of student oral communication skills is based only upon teacher ratings. Although all teachers were trained to use the form,

there may be individual response set patterns of teachers and other biases that have affected the reliability of the ratings.

2. The rating form utilized was a graphic type of scale. Summary types of ratings were required rather than identification of the presence or absence of specific observable behaviors. The four categories chosen were general categories. The validity of the scale and ratings might be a limiting factor.

3. The analysis of student skills was completed on only those students who were rated by the teacher in September and in April. Since there is a large precentage of migrant workers, the analysis does not represent the total school population.

4. Not all teachers completed the rating forms and checklists in the same manner also contributing to missing data and making certain types of analysis impossible.

THE RESULTS

The first question to be addressed is whether the workshops or summer institute helped students improve their oral communication skills. The students were compared on each of the four dimensions of communication skills: Delivery, Organization, Content, and Language. A two way classification table was constructed for each dimension with the ordinate or y axis representing the pretest rating and the x axis or abscissa representing

the post test rating.

The comparison of students' ratings on the Delivery is presented in Table 1. One hundred and seventeen (42%) were rated higher in April than in September on the Delivery dimension. One hundred twenty-six (45%) were rated the same. Thirty-six (13%) were rated lower in April than in September. Seventy-seven (28%) were rated one point higher while 37 (13%) were rated two points higher. Three (1%) were rated three points higher in April than in September. Thirty-two (11%) received one point lower ratings in April than in September. Only three were rated two points lower in April than in September.

TABLE 1

PRE AND POST RATINGS
OF HASTINGS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS
ON DELIVERY

Pre Rating	Post Rating					Total
	Poor		Satisfactory		Good	
	1	2	3	4	5	
1	9	16	17	2	0	44
2	2	29	24	13	1	69
3	1	14	61	31	7	114
4	0	2	13	19	6	40
5	0	0	1	3	8	12
TOTAL	12	61	116	68	22	279

The comparisons of the two ratings for Organization is presented in Table 2. Twenty-eight percent were rated one point higher in April than in September; eleven percent, two points higher and 3 percent, three points higher. Overall 110 students (42%) of the students had a more positive rating of their organization skills at the end of the year. Nineteen percent of the total group received lower ratings at the end of the year than at the beginning. Thirty-nine percent received the same rating each time.

TABLE 2

PRE AND POST RATINGS
OF HASTINGS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS
ON ORGANIZATION

Pre Rating	Post Rating Poor 1	2	Satisfactory 3	4	Good 5	TOTAL
1	5	7	19	2	0	33
2	6	20	24	2	5	57
3	3	14	52	22	9	110
4	0	0	20	16	10	46
5	0	0	2	4	11	17
TOTAL	14	41	117	56	35	264

The analysis of the pre and post test ratings for Content is presented in Table 3. One hundred fourteen (43%) students were rated higher at the end of the school year than the beginning. Forty percent received the same ratings on both occasions. Forty-four students (17%) were rated lower at the end of the year than the beginning. Twenty-nine percent of the group were rated one point higher while 13 percent received two more points, and two percent three points higher.

TABLE 3

PRE AND POST RATINGS
OF HASTINGS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS
ON CONTENT

Pre Rating	Post Rating 1	2	Satisfactory 3	4	Good 5	TOTAL
1	2	5	19	1	0	27
2	6	19	28	5	3	61
3	1	18	46	28	10	103
4	0	1	12	28	15	56
5	0	0	0	6	11	17
TOTAL	9	43	105	68	39	264

TABLE 4

PRE AND POST RATINGS
OF THE HASTINGS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS
ON LANGUAGE/GRAMMAR AND CHOICE OF WORDS

Pre Rating	Post Rating Poor 1	2	Satisfactory 3	4	Good 5	TOTAL
1	7	14	16	1	1	39
2	5	32	38	7	4	86
3	0	9	58	26	4	97
4	0	1	13	16	12	42
5	0	0	1	4	10	15
TOTAL	12	56	126	54	31	279

The Language dimension ratings are presented in Table 4. One hundred twenty-three students (44%) received a higher rating in April than in September. The same number of students received the same rating both times. Thirty-three (12%) of the students were rated lower at the end of the school year than at the beginning. Ninety (32%) were rated 1 point higher, twenty-seven (10%) were rated 2 points higher and the remainder three or more points higher.

The means of the pre and post ratings by classroom are presented in Table 5 for each of the four dimensions. The Content Dimension received

the highest overall rating both on the pre test and post test. Delivery had the lowest mean score with Language, second lowest. Organization was the second highest dimension. There is an increase in the post rating from the pre rating on all four dimensions. Overall the ratings are about 4 higher in April than in September.

The second question to be answered was was there a difference between summer institute participants and non participants. The first analysis was computed by analyzing whether students gained, remained the same, or were ranked lower on each of the four communication dimensions. The comparison of students whose teachers participated in the Summer Institute with those who just participated in the four inservice workshops on Delivery is presented in Table 6. A chi square of 15.08 was computed and with 2 degrees of freedom was found to be significant at the .001 level. Rating patterns were not independent of group. Fifty percent of the students from teachers who attended the Summer Institute showed a gain toward higher competency in Delivery as compared with 34 percent of the students from teachers who just participated in the workshops. About the same percentage of both groups showed no gain i.e., had the same ratings each time. This was true for 46 percent of the Workshop group and for 44 percent of the Institute group. The differences can be seen in the percent showing lower ratings. Twenty percent of the Workshop group declined as compared to just six percent of the Summer Institute group.

The summary table for Organization is reported in Table 6. A chi square

of 26.98 was computed and with two degrees of freedom was found to be significant at the .001 level of significance. Rating patterns were not independent of group. Fifty-three percent of the students whose teachers attended the Summer Institute showed a positive gain in their Organization skills during the year as compared with 31 percent of the students whose teachers attended the four workshops. About the same percentage of both groups showed no change in their ratings. Thirty-nine percent of the Workshop group as compared to 40 percent of the Summer Institute group received the same ratings both in September and in April. Only seven percent of the Summer Institute students had lower post ratings than their pre ratings as compared to 31 percent of the Workshop students.

TABLE 5

PRE AND POST TEST MEANS BY CLASSROOM
ON THE MASSACHUSETTS TEACHER
OBSERVATION RATING SCALE

Group		Delivery 1 Pre	Delivery 1 Post	Organization 2 Pre	Organization 2 Post	Content 3 Pre	Content 3 Post	Language 4 Pre	Language 4 Post
Control									
Spec Ed 1-6	(10)	2.20	3.00	1.90	2.90	2.10	3.10	1.80	3.00
Pre Sch	(15)	1.60	2.60	1.40	----	1.60	----	2.00	2.73
Grade 1	(18)	1.94	2.94	2.28	3.00	2.11	3.11	1.94	2.78
Grade 1	(17)	2.59	2.65	2.65	2.94	2.53	2.88	2.24	2.71
Grade 3	(9)	2.11	3.11	1.78	3.11	1.78	3.11	1.78	3.11
Grade 3	(17)	4.47	4.12	4.47	4.00	4.47	4.35	4.47	4.12
Grade 4	(23)	3.35	2.91	3.48	2.91	3.52	3.09	3.09	3.13
Grade 5/6	(13)	3.62	3.85	3.92	3.85	4.00	3.85	3.85	3.85
Grade 5/6	(20)	2.80	2.70	2.95	2.65	2.85	2.65	2.90	2.70
Workshop									
Pre School	(11)	2.73	2.82	2.45	2.64	2.36	2.64	2.18	2.55
Kindergarten	(15)	2.93	4.07	2.73	4.73	3.07	4.93	2.73	3.67
Kindergarten	(14)	2.71	3.21	2.57	3.21	2.64	3.14	2.50	3.14
Grade 1	(18)	1.78	2.50	1.83	2.61	1.89	2.72	1.89	2.61
Grade 3	(24)	2.17	2.38	2.38	2.42	2.88	2.88	2.42	2.75
Grade 4	(19)	2.89	2.95	2.84	3.16	2.84	3.11	2.79	3.05
Grade 5/6	(16)	3.19	4.25	3.56	4.50	3.50	4.50	3.50	4.50
Grade 5/6	(20)	2.45	3.30	2.90	3.50	2.95	3.30	2.45	2.95
TOTAL		2.67	3.10	2.84	3.22	2.91	3.32	2.67	3.13

TABLE 6

COMPARISON OF RATINGS OF SUMMER INSTITUTE GROUPS
WITH WORKSHOP GROUPS ON DELIVERY

Group		+	=	-	N
Workshop		48	66	28	142
	%	.34	.46	.20	
Institute		69	60	8	137
	%	.50	.44	.06	
TOTAL		117	126	36	279

TABLE 7

COMPARISON OF RATINGS OF SUMMER INSTITUTE GROUPS
WITH WORKSHOP GROUPS ON ORGANIZATION

Group		+	=	-	N
Workshop		39	49	39	127
	%	.31	.39	.31	
Institute		72	55	10	137
	%	.53	.40	.07	
TOTAL		111	104	49	264

The information for comparing the Content ratings is provided in Table 8. A chi square of 10.12 was computed and with two degrees of freedom found to be significant at the .01 level. Rating patterns on Content were not independent of group. Fifty percent of the Summer Institute group had higher ratings in April than in September as compared to 36 percent of the Workshop group. Again about the same proportion of both groups had the identical ratings on both occasions. Only 10 percent of the Institute group showed a negative pattern as compared to 24 percent of the Workshop group.

The comparison of the two groups on Language is reported in Table 9. A chi square of 16.13 was computed and with two degrees of freedom was found to be significant at the .001 level. Rating patterns on Language were not independent of group. Students from the classes of teachers participating in the Summer Institute showed a greater proportion of positive gain than those from classes of teachers who participated only in the Workshop (53% to 35%). Slightly more of the Workshop Group (46%) had the same pre and post ratings than the Institute group (42%). More Workshop students (18%) than Institute students (5%) had negative gain.

Analysis was also computed using the classroom as the sampling unit. The mean ratings for each class is listed in Table 5. A two by two table was constructed for each of the four communication dimensions with group as one variate and gain or loss as the other variate. None of the eight Summer Institute classes had lower means on the post rating than on the pre rating

TABLE 8

COMPARISON OF RATINGS OF SUMMER INSTITUTE GROUPS
WITH WORKSHOP GROUPS ON CONTENT

Group		+	=	-	Total
Workshop		46	51	30	127
	%	.36	.40	.24	
Institute		69	54	14	137
	%	.50	.39	.10	
Total		115	105	44	264

TABLE 9

COMPARISON OF RATINGS OF SUMMER INSTITUTE GROUPS
WITH WORKSHOP GROUPS ON LANGUAGE

Group		+	=	-	Total
Workshop		50	66	26	142
	%	.35	.46	.18	
Institute		73	57	7	137
	%	.53	.42	.05	
Total		123	123	33	279

while a quarter of the Workshop group showed negative trends. A chi square of 5.94 was computed and with one degree of freedom was found to be significant at the .05 level. Patterns of ratings was not independent of group. A greater percentage of Summer Institute classes had positive gain ratings on Delivery. The same pattern holds true for the other three dimensions. A chi square of 8.33 was computed on the Organization dimension and was significant at the .01 level. All Institute classes showed positive gain as compared to only 50 percent of the Workshop classes.

A chi square of 7.67 was computed for the Content dimension and with one degree of freedom was also found to be significant at the .01 level. Seven of eight of the Institute classes showed a positive gain, one no gain, as compared to fifty percent of the Workshop group.

A chi square of 5.14 was computed for the Language dimension and with one degree of freedom was found to be significant at the .05 level. All eight Institute classes showed positive gain as compared to 75 percent of the Workshop classes.

The third question to be addressed was whether there were different patterns in how teachers from different grade levels utilized and emphasized communication activities. Teachers checked the activities they utilized during the week each week. The rank order of the type of classroom communication activity by grade level is presented in Table 10. Informal Conversation was the major technique utilized at all grade levels. Extended Discussion was second in order of use from Grades 1 through 6. Other

TABLE 10

RANK ORDER OF TYPE OF CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES BY LEVEL

Activity	Preschool	K	1-3	4	5/6
1. INFORMAL CONVERSATION	1	1	1	1	1
2. EXTENDED DISCUSSION	3.5	5	2	2	2
3. DEBATES/ PANELS					4
4. PRESENTATIONS (REPORTS, ORAL PERFORMANCES, ETC.)	2	2	4	3	3
5. DRAMA	3.5	4	5	5	
6. GAMES/ROLE PLAYING	5	3	3	4	
7. LECTURE/ QUESTION					5

activities received more attention at the kindergarten and pre-school level. Presentations (reports, oral performance of literature, Radio/T.V. speaking, cassette recording, story telling) were the second most frequently used activity at the kindergarten and pre-school level. These activities become more widely used again in the upper grades, Grades 4 to 6 where they ranked third in use.

Games (role playing activities) were the third most widely used activity in the lower primary grades, Grades 1 to 3. These activities were least used on the fifth and sixth grade level. They were occasionally included on the preschool level but more popular on the kindergarten level.

Debates/Panels were not used until the 5/6 grade level and were primarily tools of the social studies and science teachers. Lecture/Question method was a technique used in the 5/6 mathematics classes.

In general, Summer Institute teachers at the Kindergarten and Preschool level tended to utilize a wider variety of communication techniques than the Workshop group. On the lower primary level, there appears to be no difference in the patterns of both groups. On the 5/6 grade level, subject area taught might account for more of the differences than attendance or non attendance at the Summer Institute.

The teachers were also asked to check how much time they spent per day on the Speaking/Listening dimension. Preschool teachers typically spent 1 to 10 minutes while Kindergarten time was over 30 minutes per day. In

Grade 1, it dropped to 10 minutes or less but in Grades 2 and 3 was 11 to 20 minutes. In Grade 4, the typical time spent was 21 to 30 minutes. On the 5/6 grade level the time spent was a function of the subject area taught. The Science teacher reported that the usual time was 21 to 30 minutes while the Mathematics teacher checked 10 - 20 minutes. The Language Arts and Social Studies teachers indicated 1 to 10 minutes.

Preschool teachers tended to put more emphasis on Delivery and a secondary emphasis on Content. Kindergarten teachers stressed all four dimensions Delivery, Organization, Content, and Language. Although all dimensions tended to be stressed in the lower primary grades, the rank order of activities was Delivery, Content, Language, and then Organization.

On the fourth grade level all dimensions were stressed but Organization and Delivery given more emphasis. On the 5/6 grade level, all dimensions were emphasized in all subject areas. Delivery was given slightly more attention.

The teachers were also asked to check the estimated number of times per day they used Observation Questions, Comparison Questions, Summarizing Questions, and Inference/Opinion Questions. Preschool teachers utilized Observation Questions most frequently, 1 to 5 times per day. They rarely used Inference/Opinion questions.

Kindergarten teachers asked Observation Questions 6 to 15 times per day and utilized Comparison, Summarizing, and Inference Questions 1 to 5 times

per day.

In Grades 1 to 3, Observation Questions were used most frequently. Second grade teachers tended to ask this type of Question about 15 times per day. Third grade teachers 6 to 15 times per day and first grade teachers 1 to 5 times per day. Summarizing Questions received more attention than either Comparison or Inference Questions at this level.

On the Fourth Grade level Observation Questions tended to be used 15 or more times per day as compared to Inferential Questions 1 to 5 times per day and Comparison, and Summarizing Questions 6 to 15 times per day.

There were equal emphases placed on the type of question strategy used in Grades 5/6. There were, however, differences in the amount of time used in questioning. In Science, questions were used 15 or more times per day whereas with the other subject areas 1 to 5 times per day.

Teachers were also asked to indicate how many times per week students were provided with opportunities to evaluate their own oral communication. The mode across all grade levels was 1 to 5 times per week. In general little or no emphasis was placed upon student evaluation of their oral communication skills at the pre school and kindergarten level. More emphasis was placed on the the third grade level, than the second or

first grade level in the lower primary grades. Third grade did this 11 to 20 times per week, as compared to around 5 or 6 times for second graders and slightly less for first graders.

On the Fourth Grade level more emphasis was placed upon Evaluation than previous grades, 21 to 30 times per week on the average.

Less emphasis, in general, was placed upon Evaluation at the 5/6 grade level. Students were given the opportunity 1 to 5 times per week. There were subject area differences. In Science classes, however, students were given 21-30 opportunities per week to evaluate their oral communication.

DISCUSSION

The Oral Communications project had three overall goals for the 1981-82 school year:

1. to improve student performance in communication skills,

2. to increase teachers' knowledge of what curriculum methods enhance the development of communication skills,

3. to increase teachers' understanding of the different dimensions of oral communication skills and question strategies.

The evaluation for the project was designed to answer the following three questions:

1. Did student performance in communication skills improve?

2. Was there a difference between Summer Institute participants and non-participants in how their students achieved in the four dimensions of communication skills?

3. Was there a correlation between grade level and dimensions of communication skills emphasized?

There was a statisically significant improvement in the student performance in communication skills. A relatively low percentage of students (12%-19%) received lower ratings in the skill at the end of the year than at the beginning. It should be noted that the students are from rural areas and primarily from families with lower socio-economic status. The ratings pile up at the middle category or Satisfactory level. Given the Achievement level on the average of students to be at grade level or slightly below, the ratings appear to be realistic and not inflated.

Students of teachers who attended the Summer Institute showed more gain than students of teachers who were non-participants. Partially, differences may reflect the impact of more intensive training offered by the institute as well as a chance to integrate skills from previous workshops and plan curriculum activities for developing oral communication skills for the school year. The teachers may also be the more enthusiastic group within the school because they did volunteer to participate.

There were different patterns of what oral communication activities were used by teachers as well as some subject area differences. The differences in part might relate to the maturity level of the students as well as to the content or objectives taught at a given grade level. Other differences might be reflective of the individual's teaching style, cognitive style, or background in teacher training. The years of teaching experience of the staff might need to be considered in interpreting the results.

Overall the teachers attempted to implement oral communication activities in the curriculum and to improve the oral communication skills of their students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There needs to be follow-up and renewal sessions on Oral Communication Skills schedules for the 1982-83 school year.

2. There should be further evaluation of the project to find out from the teachers their reaction to the handbook as well as their reaction to what activities worked well and did not work. They need to evaluate the training now that they have had a year to reflect on the project.

3. Participants in the project should be used as resource people and guest lecturers for workshops on communication skills

and preservice methods courses.

4. The project utilized primarily self report forms completed by teachers. Other methods of assessing what teachers are doing in the classroom need to be explored. Observation by others, diaries, structured interviews, need to be utilized in further studies.

5. The project utilized primarily teachers' ratings of student performance. Summary ratings were utilized. Standardized tests and informal inventories should be reviewed for use.

6. The goals are global and possibly more specific objectives need to be developed for each grade level and the evaluation instruments be more reflective of the specific behaviors required for each grade or subject area.

APPENDIX A

SCHEDULES

WEEK ONE

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:00 - 10:30 Introduction Oral Communication (Tafoya)	9:00 - 11:30 Questioning Skills related to Communication Teaching Strategies (Eggen/Kirk)	9:00 - 12:00 Relating Communication Teaching Strategies to Reading and Writing Instruction (Bolden/Keenan)	9:00 - 11:30 Questioning Skills related to Communication Teaching Strategies (Eggen/Kirk)	9:00 - 11:30 Communication Assessment (Tafoya)
10:30 - 12:00 Assessment of Oral Communication (Tafoya)	11:30 - 12:00 LUNCH		11:30 - 12:00 LUNCH	11:30 - 12:00 LUNCH
12:00 - 12:30 LUNCH	12:00 - 2:15 Curriculum Design for Communication Skills (Scheirer)	12:00 - 12:30 LUNCH	12:00 - 2:15 Curriculum Development (Scheirer)	12:00 - 1:45 Formulate Specific Communication Objectives related to individual content areas (Team)
12:30 - 2:15 Listening Skills (Keenan)		12:30 - 2:15 Curriculum Design for Communication (Bolden/Keenan)		1:45 - 2:30 Summary and Review (Tafoya)
2:15 - 2:30 Summary and Review (Tafoya)	2:15 - 2:30 Summary and Review (Tafoya)	2:15 - 2:30 Summary and Review (Tafoya)	2:15 - 2:30 Summary and Review (Tafoya)	

WEEK TWO

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:00 - 12:00 Curriculum Analysis	9:00 - 9:30 Feedback Session (Team)	9:00 - 9:30 Feedback Session (Team)	9:00 - 9:30 Feedback Session (Team)	9:00 - 11:00 Small Group Curriculum Report
(Small Groups)	9:30 - 12:00 Curriculum Writing (Small Groups)	9:30 - 12:00 Curriculum Writing (Small Groups)	9:30 - 12:00 Curriculum Writing (Small Groups)	11:00 - 12:00 Integration of a Communication Curriculum
12:00 - 12:30 LUNCH	12:00 - 12:30 LUNCH	12:00 - 12:30 LUNCH	12:00 - 12:30 LUNCH	12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH
12:30 - 2:00 Curriculum Writing (Small Groups)	12:30 - 2:00 Sharing/Review Comments (Total Group)	12:30 - 2:00 Curriculum Writing (Small Groups)	12:30 - 2:00 Curriculum Writing (Small Groups)	1:00 - 2:30 Summary and WRAP-UP Session
2:00 - 2:30 Summary and Review	2:00 - 2:30 Summary and Review	2:00 - 2:30 Summary and Review	2:00 - 2:30 Summary and Review	

QUESTIONING SKILLS

Objective no. 1 — Participants will understand the role of questioning in developing oral communication skills in children.

Objective no. 2 — Participants will develop questioning techniques designed to facilitate classroom interaction and encourage students to express themselves orall.

Objective no. 3 — Participants will understand the relationship between oral communication and the traditional curriculum.

Objective no. 4 — Participants will develop teaching techniques designed to encourage oral communication in specific content areas (mathematics, social studies, science, etc.)

CURRICULUM DESIGN

Objective no. 1 — Participants will be able to define curriculum as they see it operating in their school situations.

Objective no. 2 — Participants will be able to describe the sources of the curriculum which affect curriculum development decisions in Hastings.

Objective no. 3 — Participants will be able to use concepts of curriculum development -- scope, sequence, selection, articulation -- in their own curriculum development.

Objective no. 4 — Participants will be able to distinguish between goals and objectives and between objectives and activities in the process of writing curriculum.

Objective no. 5 — Participants will be able to identify steps in the process of curriculum development.

Objective no. 6 — Participants will be able to follow these steps as they develop communication curricula.

Objective no. 7 — Participants will be able to analyze curriculum materials in order to select those appropriate for particular curriculum purposes.

Objective no. 8 — Participants will be able to identify the critiera they will use in their curriculum development activities so that their results will be useable in Hastings schools.

Objective no. 9 — Participants will be able to incorporate their own curriculum development efforts into existing curriculum guidelines while using the materials available.

APPENDIX B

MASSACHUSETTS TEACHER OBSERVATION RATING SCALE

TEACHER_____ GRADE_____ DATE_____

Directions: Please rate your class in the four areas of Oral Communication: If you need clarification, please refer to your instructional packet, one of the resource teachers and/or Teacher Corps.

NAME	RATING				
	POOR		SATIS-FACTORY		GOOD
1. _____					
Delivery (volume, rate & articulation)	1	2	3	4	5
Organization (relationships & order)	1	2	3	4	5
Content (quantity, relevance & adaptation)	1	2	3	4	5
Language (grammar & choice of words)	1	2	3	4	5
2. _____					
Delivery (volume, rate & articulation)	1	2	3	4	5
Organization (relationship & order)	1	2	3	4	5
Content (quantity, relevance & adaptation)	1	2	3	4	5
Language (grammar & choice of words)	1	2	3	4	5
3. _____					
Delivery (volume, rate & articulation)	1	2	3	4	5
Organization (relationship & order)	1	2	3	4	5
Content (quantity, relevance & adaptation)	1	2	3	4	5
Language (grammar & choice of words)	1	2	3	4	5
4. _____					
Delivery (volume, rate & articulation)	1	2	3	4	5
Organization (relationship & order)	1	2	3	4	5
Content (quantity, relevance & adaptation)	1	2	3	4	5
Language (grammar & choice of words)	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX C

OBJECTIVES

ORAL COMMUNICATION

Objective no. 1 Participants will increase their knowledge of general communication theory.

Objective no. 2 Participants will increase their knowledge of specific oral communication.

Objective no. 3 Participants will increase their knowledge of the criteria for the assessment of communication competency.

Participants can use this knowledge to design and select appropriate oral communication instructional activities for their classrooms.

Participants will be able to assess the communication competency of their students, so that they can assess the oral competency of students in their classrooms in formal identified areas.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

ORAL LANGUAGES, LISTENING, READING, WRITING

Objective no. 1 Participants will demonstrate understanding of the interrelationships among all four language arts.

Objective no. 2 Participants will understand that oral language is a vital component of any listening, reading, or writing activity.

Objective no. 3 Participants will understand and appreciate that competence in each of the language arts is dependent upon the child's developmental stage.

Objective no. 4 Participants will develop specific language objectives and activities suited to the needs of their students.

Objective no. 5 Participants will apply techniques for teaching the language arts to their own classroom situations.

Objective no. 6 Participants will understand that enhancement of child's self-concept is the foundation upon which language skills are based.

INSTRUCTION

1. This item requires a check mark in one or more blanks. This tells us what kinds of oral communications activities you are using and over time will indicate which you prefer. Just check any you used during the week - don't worry about how often or how long they lasted.

2. This item requires an estimated number in blank. We know many activities overlap dimensions, but if they were mostly one please place them in that category. i.e. Supposed you worked on 6 activities that were mostly oral comprehension, but you did encourage students to speak clearly - and you had oral reports once during the week that stressed all four dimensions, you would record a 7 beside organization and a 1 beside delivery, content and language.

   NOTE: These dimensions are for both speaking and listening so whether student is reporting or listening, they are participating.

3. This item requires a check. Think through your week about how long your class usually spends on oral communication activities each day. (Estimate, don't calculate)

4. Item requires a check. Approximate number of different types of questions is what we want, not an exact count, we expect this to vary according to grade level.

5. This also requires a check and we want an estimate, not an exact number.

WEEKLY SUMMARY OF ORAL COMMUNICATION CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. Types of Activities (check those used during week. More than one may be checked)

a. Informal Conversation ___
b. Extended Discussion ___
c. Debates; Panels ___
d. Presentations ___ (reports, oral performance of literature, Radio/TV speaking; Cassette recordings, story telling)
e. Drama ___ (dramatics, choral dramatics)
f. Games/role playing ___

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2. Speaking/Listening Dimensions (List the approximate number of times dimensions were addressed during week; if activities overlapped-check all involved)

a. Delivery ___
b. Organization ___
c. Content ___
d. Language ___

---

3. Amount of time spent (check estimated average per day)

0 minutes ___	11-20 minutes ___	above 30 minutes ___
1-10 minutes ___	21-30 minutes ___	

---

4. Questioning Strategy (check estimated number of times used per day)

Observation question	Comparison question	Summarizing question	Inference/Opinion question
0 ___	0 ___	0 ___	0 ___
1-5 ___	1-5 ___	1-5 ___	1-5 ___
6-15 ___	6-15 ___	6-15 ___	6-15 ___
above 15 ___	above 15 ___	above 15 ___	above 15 ___

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5. How many times were students provided with opportunities to evaluate their own oral communication? (check estimated average per week)

0 ___	6-10 ___	21-30 ___
1-5 ___	11-20 ___	over 30 ___